



Paseo Herencia provides another exciting evening of island ambiance

The new Paseo Herencia Mall in Palm Beach has quickly become a center for lively activities and exciting events. Friday evening, the authentic island music of “Grupo Betico” filled the air, which also filled the courtyard with an appreciative audience.

Many came to witness the launching of a book by Evert Bongers, a teacher at the Colegio Arubano, titled “Augustus Scur” (Dark August.) It chronicles the summer of 1977 when Aruban citizens staged a two week protest to bring Holland to the bargaining table and negotiate “Status Aparte” for the island. A very young Evert and his wife Helene had arrived on the island barely one week before these historic events, to which they were amazed witnesses.

During the launching of “Augustus Scur,” Evert Bongers invited John van der Kuip, who had been legal advisor to Betico Croes, the man who was a driving force behind “Status Aparte” and is considered the “Liberator” of Aruba, to the microphone. John recollected the series of frustrations that led to the protest and the extreme events of that summer while photographs from that time were projected on the walls of the stage. Afterwards, Evert presented the first copies of his book to Lupita Geil, Director of UNOCA, which subsidized its printing, and to Astrid Britten, Director of the National Library.

The balance of the evening was spent enjoying the music of “Grupo Betico,” which is named for its founder, Betico Croes, and to whom the night was dedicated. Evert spent the rest of the night autographing his book, and available copies were sold out within less than an hour. “Augustus Scur” is written in Dutch, and can be obtained at bookstores around the island for fifteen Aruban florins or \$8.50. This slim volume provides an interesting insight into a little-known period of modern Aruban history in both pictures and words, recreating those times.